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ABSTRACT

This guide is part of a toolkit designed to help states and school districts meet teacher recruitment and retention challenges. Information comes primarily from a 1996 report, Breaking the Class Ceiling: Paraeducator Pathways to Teaching, which examines how paraeducator-to-teacher programs nationwide work to create a more qualified and diverse teaching force for U.S. schools. This guide helps people understand the value of paraeducator-to-teacher programs; obstacles paraeducators face in becoming teachers; important elements of effective programs; what is involved in staffing and recruiting participants; and building support for programs. It explains who paraeducators are and why they should be recruited to be teachers. It also presents profiles of paraeducators and discusses the design of paraeducator-to-teacher recruitment programs. Potential barriers for participants are noted (e.g., financial problems, basic skills testing, family responsibilities, language skills, and time commitment). The guide explains how to develop effective programs, discussing program design, staffing considerations, participant recruitment, and follow-up support for graduates. It also discusses how to build support for a program, highlighting collaboration and funding. It concludes with an in-depth look at successful programs, a checklist for program development, and a list of resources. (SM)

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